

# CHILD SAFETY RECORD KEEPING AND MANAGEMENT POLICY

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

St Brendan's Catholic Primary School, Lakes Entrance (the School) is committed to the effective management of public records and to ensuring that the creation, storage and appropriate disposal of public records are in accordance with the *Public Records Act 1973* (Vic.) and standards issued by the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) and fulfill the School's record keeping obligations under Child Safe Standard 2 of *Ministerial Order No. 1359*.

The Child Safe Standards are compulsory minimum standards to ensure organisations that provide services to children are well prepared to keep children and young people safe from harm and abuse.

Schools must:

- maintain records relevant to child safety and wellbeing and keep them organised in a way that ensures they are searchable and retrievable.
- store child safety and wellbeing records securely, protected from unauthorised access.
- retain student safety and wellbeing records for a minimum of 75 years.
- retain all records documenting the reporting and investigation of sexual abuse incidents, allegations and disclosures for a minimum of 99 years.
- retain screening records for school staff applicants, such as working with children checks as per the School records retention guide.

## 2.0 PURPOSE

Child Safety and Wellbeing records are any records that involve or relate to matters concerning child safety or the wellbeing of a child, which may include records relating to:

- concerns or complaints relating to child safety or the safety or wellbeing of a child.
- safety incidents involving a child.
- mandatory reporting.
- reportable allegations.
- reportable conduct.
- other matters relating to child safety or the safety or wellbeing of a child.

### **3.0 CATHOLIC MISSION**

The School brings to life the mission of the Catholic Church by engaging and aligning all efforts toward the achievement of DOSCEL's vision for education: *faith-inspired educational excellence for a hope filled future*.

### **4.0 COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY**

The School holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of Catholic education. This commitment is drawn from the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ.

### **5.0 SCOPE**

This Policy fulfills the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority's (VRQA) Minimum Standard for School Registration obligations, requiring the School to have policies and procedures to provide students with a safe environment where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel safe. The School is responsible for ensuring all staff are aware of their legal obligations.

This Policy ensures the School understands and follows its recordkeeping obligations so that the School meets its obligation related to the Child Safe Standards. Child Safe Standard 2 (Ensure that child safety and wellbeing are embedded in school leadership, governance and culture), requires schools to create, maintain and dispose of records relevant to child safety and wellbeing in accordance with PROV Standards.

Child Safety and Wellbeing records are any records that involve or relate to matters concerning child safety or which involves or relates to matters involving the safety or wellbeing of a child, which may include records relating to:

- concerns or complaints relating to child safety or the safety or wellbeing of a child.
- safety incidents involving a child.
- mandatory reporting.
- reportable allegations.
- reportable conduct.
- other matters relating to child safety or the safety or wellbeing of a child.

This Policy informs the *Child Safety Record Keeping and Management Procedures*.

## **6.0 POLICY OUTCOMES**

- 6.1 Full and accurate records are created and kept meeting legislative requirements and community needs.
  - Records consistently meet compliance standards and provide reliable evidence of school activities and decisions.
  - External audits confirm accuracy and completeness of documentation.
- 6.2 Records are organised so they can be readily accessed and used for authorised purposes.
  - Staff can quickly locate and retrieve records when required.
  - Authorised users report improved efficiency in accessing information.
- 6.3 Systems and processes ensure records are kept secure from unauthorised access, amendment, use, release and disposal.
  - No breaches of record security are reported.
  - Access logs demonstrate compliance with authorisation protocols.
- 6.4 Records are stored in secure physical locations and systems are in place that protect them from misuse, damage, deterioration or loss.
  - Records remain intact and usable throughout their lifecycle.
  - Storage audits confirm compliance with security and preservation standards.
- 6.5 Records are preserved in a readable and accessible format for their minimum required retention period.
  - Records remain accessible and legible for the full retention period.
  - The PROV Retention and Disposal Authority for School Records which provides information on common school records and their minimum retention periods is reviewed to ensure compliance.
- 6.6 Staff seek authorisation from the School Principal or DOSCEL Office prior to disposing of records.
  - Disposal requests are documented and approved before action.
  - No unauthorised disposal incidents occur.
- 6.7 Staff do not dispose of any records that are likely to be required in a legal proceeding.
  - Legal holds are applied promptly and effectively.
  - Records relevant to proceedings are preserved without exception.
- 6.8 Staff do not dispose of any records relating to child safety, health and wellbeing until further notice.
  - All child safety, health and wellbeing records remain intact and accessible.

- 6.9 Records, excluding those that relate to child safety, health and wellbeing, are only disposed of when they have reached their minimum required retention period.
- Disposal logs show records are only destroyed after retention requirements are met.

## 7.0 DEFINITIONS

**Record/records:** is all information that the School and DOSCEL Office create, send or receive that provides evidence of decisions, directions and activities, particularly regarding child safety.

Records may be in digital or physical format, including documents, email correspondence, financial statements, photographs, website pages, social media posts and audio-visual recordings.

Records can be formal (e.g. meetings minutes and student files) or informal (e.g. chat history and instant messages via telephone or social media).

## 8.0 COMMUNICATION

This Policy is available on the School website and provided to parents upon request.

This Policy is available to staff through the School portal.

## 9.0 POLICY INFORMATION

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Policy Owner</b>             | Governance              |
| <b>Approving Authority</b>      | DOSCEL Board            |
| <b>Assigned Board Committee</b> | Finance, Audit and Risk |
| <b>Board Approval</b>           | 20 February 2026        |
| <b>Risk Rating</b>              | Medium                  |
| <b>Implementation</b>           | March 2026              |
| <b>Review Date</b>              | 2028                    |

| POLICY DATABASE INFORMATION |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Supporting Documents</b> | Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy<br>DOSCEL Child and Family Information Sharing Schemes Policy<br>Complaints and Grievances Management Policy<br>Privacy Policy<br>Privacy Collection Notice<br>Record Keeping Compliance Checklist<br>Record Keeping Factsheet for School Staff, Contractors and Volunteers |